

**RESTORATION INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM
FORMERLY USED DEFENSE SITES (FUDS)
PROJECT FACT SHEET
JUNE 1998**

**HNC REVISION: 28 SEPTEMBER 1998
TAG REVIEW DATE: 27 OCTOBER 1998**

1. **SITE NAME:** Victorville Precision Bombing Range
(PBR) #11

SITE NUMBER: JO9CA067700

LOCATION:

City: Victorville
County: San Bernardino
State: California

PROJECT NUMBER: JO9CA067701

CATEGORY: OE

INPR RAC: 4

ASR RAC: 5

TAG RAC: 4

2. **POC'S:**

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3. **SITE DESCRIPTION:** The former Victorville PBR #11 consisted of 640 acres located 42 miles east of Victorville and 32 miles southeast of Barstow, San Bernardino County, California, in T6N, R3E, the western half of section 36 and the eastern half of

section 35, S.B.B. & M. The site is comprised of very remote undeveloped desert land that is visited by the public using off-road vehicles for recreation and camping. The ASR states that it is 25 miles off the beaten trail at the end of a sand road. It is located 18 miles northeast of State Highway 247. According to the ASR, the 640 acre site is under the control of the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI), Bureau of Land Management (BLM). The INPR differs in that it states that 320 acres is owned by Southern California Edison.

Topography of the site is nearly level and is located in the Mojave Desert near Johnson Valley between small mountains that are part of the Fry Mountains. While there is 24 feet of relief at the site, elevations in the area range from 2,000 feet to 4,000 feet. The area is characterized by many gullies and channels leading from the mountain ranges to the playas on the desert floor. The natural vegetation is mainly desert shrubs, grasses, and forbs. Depth to groundwater is not known, but it is known that 235 feet is the depth for other PBR's in the area. There are no streams, gullies or rills at the site. The Mojave River is the only watershed in the area.

The region has an arid desert climate characterized by long hot summers, warm winters, little rainfall, sunshine, and low humidity. In winter, the average daily temperature is 45° F and the average daily minimum is 30° F . The average summer temperature is 77° F with an average daily maximum of 97° F. Total annual precipitation is five inches at Victorville.

4. **SITE HISTORY:** In May 1943, the War Department acquired 320 acres by transfer from the U.S. Department of Interior through Public Land Order (PLO) 125. In addition, the War Department acquired in fee 320 acres from the State of California under Directive No. RE-D 1554, dated 2 September 1942. Subsequently, Directive No. RE-D 4199A (general) dated 16 June 1942 amended Directive No. RE-D 1554 in order to acquire a leasehold interest in lieu of a fee simple interest. The 640 acre site was designated as Victorville Precision Bombing Range (PBR) #11 and used as a practice bombing area by the Army Air Forces based at the former Victorville Air Field.

PBR #11 was one of 23 PBRs and 2 demolition bombing targets used by Victorville Army Air Field (AAF) for bombardier cadet training during WWII. The military improvements on the site consisted of frame butts and appurtenances, fences and gates, and a bombing target located in the center of the site as depicted on ASR maps. The target was composed of asphalt strips five feet wide configured as three concentric circles with radii of 100, 200, and 300 feet. In addition, there were two strips of asphalt

which transected the concentric circles at right angles to each other. The only DOD improvements still on the site are the weathered remains of three concentric target rings and the center of the asphalt bombing target. Practice 100 lb. bombs, M38A2, and M85, were utilized at the site. Chemical bombs, M47A1 and M47A2, configured as practice bombs filled with sand, were also used.

On August 13, 1947, the site was declared as surplus to the War Assets Administration (WAA). Also, on 13 August 1947, the 320 acres of former Public Domain was authorized for retransfer to DOI. On 29 March 1954, Public Land Order No. 948 partially revoked Public Land Order No. 125 thereby allowing DOI to assume custody of the 320 acres. The remaining 320 acres of leasehold property was relinquished upon termination of the lease effective 18 August 1948. A letter dated 1 November 1948 from the Assistant Chief of Engineers for Real Estate to the Director, Bureau of Land Management, Department of the Interior, requested cancellation of Public Land Order 125. This letter declared the bombing target to have been dedudded and certified to be free and clear of explosives or explosive objects reasonably possible to detect by visual inspection. All removable improvements such as fencing and gates were removed. Whereas the ASR states that the site is under the jurisdiction of BLM, the INPR states that 320 of the 640 acres is owned by Southern California Edison.

5. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

AREA A

Size, Acres:	37
Former Use:	Bomb Target
Present Use:	Undeveloped Desert Land—used by Public for recreation and camping
Probable End Use:	Undeveloped Desert Land—used by Public for recreation and camping
Ordnance Presence:	Confirmed
Type:	100 lb practice bombs: M38A2 and M85. Chemical bombs, M47A1 and M47A2, configured as practice bombs filled with sand.

AREA B

Size, Acres:	306
Former Use:	Safety Zone
Present Use:	Undeveloped Desert Land—used by Public for recreation and camping
Probable End Use:	Undeveloped Desert Land—used by Public for recreation and camping
Ordnance Presence:	Potential

Type: 100 lb practice bombs: M38A2 and M85. Chemical bombs, M47A1 and M47A2, configured as practice bombs filled with sand.

AREA C

Size, Acres: 297
Former Use: Remaining Land
Present Use: Undeveloped Desert Land—used by Public for recreation and camping
Probable End Use: Undeveloped Desert Land—used by Public for recreation and camping
Ordnance Presence: **None**
Type: Not Applicable

6. **CURRENT STATUS:** The Archives Search Report (ASR) for Victorville Precision Bombing Range (PBR) #11 was completed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Rock Island District, in June 1998.

7. **STRATEGY:**

AREA A: RAC 4;EE/CA
AREA B: RAC 4;EE/CA
AREA C: RAC 5;NOFA

8. **ISSUES AND CONCERNS:** The Huntsville Center Technical Advisory Group (TAG) met and discussed this ASR on 27 October 1998 and determined an overall site strategy of EE/CA, RAC 4, **with** RAC 4, EE/CA **for** Area A, RAC 4, EE/CA **for** Area B, **and** RAC 5, NOFA **for** Area C. No energetic OE was discovered by the SI team. Debris from M38A2 and M85 100 lb practice bombs and M47A1 and M47A2 sand filled chemical bombs were only found by the SI team **in** Area A, the Bomb Target. Area B has a potential for OE since it is the area which surrounds Area A. NOFA is the strategy for Area C, that area at the perimeter of the site furthest away from the target center. No incidents involving OE have been reported to local authorities concerning this site. There is a record of clearance for this site which states that it was cleared of all dangerous and/or explosive materials and was safe for the purpose of grazing, mining or other agricultural purposes. The ASR all states that this particular site was located in a very remote location and that it was the cleanest looking site of nine PBR's visited in that vicinity. The TAG considered NOFA for the entire site as recommended in the ASR, but decided on a strategy of EE/CA.

HNC Safety Comments: Disagrees with the strategy of NOFA, RAC 5 recommended in the ASR; filled out a new RAC Form with a RAC

score of 4 for the entire site (Note: The RAC Score of 3 on page 1 needs to be changed to RAC 4 to agree with Table 3 on page 8). The ASR Support District maintained that RAC 5, NOFA was the correct strategy, replying that the site is considered an isolated site visited by the public two to three months during the year. **The key to the strategy for this site is defining "isolated site" as listed in the RAC Form at Part II, E. The ASR RAC lists this site as an "isolated site" resulting in a RAC of 5; the revised RAC Form selection is "No barrier nor Security system", which results in a RAC of 4. The site certainly does seem to be an isolated site. However, the ASR does state that the public visits the site. The TAG erred on the side of safety with a strategy of RAC 4, EE/CA.**

Clearances: The Deduidding Report at F-5 of the ASR indicates that a thorough clearance of the site was conducted. The report states in detail how eleven bombing ranges, including PBR # 11, were deduidded by six laborers and the 9800th TSU-CE Detachment #14, Bomb and Shell Disposal Team during the period 20 October 1947 through 24 January 1948 with the expenditure of 7176 hours of labor. The area to be searched was surveyed and marked; a Project Engineer and Detachment Sergeant controlled the search crew; a total of 840 tons of scrap were noted on the ranges; immediate target areas were more heavily impacted and a large percentage of the bombs were buried or partially buried necessitating several passes of the crew and considerable excavating; bombs were exploded or completely demolished using a sufficient charge of Composition C-3; and after detonations, the surrounding area was checked to insure that there was total destruction of the OE. The report ended by saying that the land is free from explosive material for the purpose of grazing, mining and/or agricultural purposes.

CWM: The ASR does not address presence of Chemical Warfare Materials at the site.

Other Projects: None

Site/Project Ownership: The INPR states that 320 acres is owned by Southern California Edison. The ASR states that the entire site is managed by BLM. Also, the INPR states that when originally acquired, 320 acres belonged to the State of California. The ASR states that the DOI owned the entire site. Document F-5 of the ASR supports the ASR perspective; Document G-1 lends credence to the INPR view. Conclusively, Document L-1 does show that 320 acres were owned by the State of California. This may require further investigation at a later date.

Precautions for Weather: Extremely high temperatures prevail most of the year. Optimum time for strenuous activity would be in the winter.

Natural Resources: The threatened desert tortoise occurs in the vicinity of the site. An on-site inspection by appropriate State and Federal personnel may be necessary to verify the presence, absence or location of listed species, or natural communities.

Historical Resources: Other than rock arts located in the vicinity, no historical/cultural resources are recorded for this site. Any intrusive measures taken at the site will require oversight by the State Historical Preservation Office (SHPO) and/or other like organizations.

9. **SCHEDULE SUMMARY:** EE/CA

10. **FUNDING/BUDGET SUMMARY:** For Official Use Only